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REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Report of the Administrator

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PURPOSE

The present report, in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 1994/33, 1995/50, 1995/51, and 1995/56, is submitted in the new common reporting format agreed upon by the secretariats of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report.

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PART ONE

FOLLOW-UP TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 44/211, 47/199 AND 50/120

I. INTRODUCTION

1. General Assembly resolution 50/120 builds on the previous resolutions 47/199 and 44/211. In this part of the report, the following three major areas common to these resolutions are addressed from the perspective of UNDP: (a) coordination; (b) programme matters; and (c) management, personnel and finance matters.

II. COORDINATION

A. Resident coordinator system

2. During the reporting period and in accordance with the wishes of the Executive Board, UNDP has made an even greater commitment to operating and strengthening the resident coordinator system, which is seen as one of the most valuable tools for the future of the United Nations system. In its decisions 95/22 and 95/23, the Board reaffirmed the mission of UNDP to help the United Nations system become a more unified and powerful force for sustainable human development and gave practical expression to that mission by earmarking an additional 1.7 per cent of total UNDP core resources for support to the United Nations system and aid coordination. This earmarking is for a new facility for programme support to the resident coordinator, in addition to 4.3 per cent of total resources already provided to support United Nations operational activities. The new facility provides extraordinary opportunities in two areas: (a) ensuring coordinated, coherent United Nations programmes at the country level and the mobilization of required resources and (b) exploring innovative ways to achieve greater rationalization of administrative services on an inter-agency basis. Part four of the present document deals with the issue of the resident coordinator system in complex emergencies.

3. As previously reported, through expanded pool arrangements, the recruitment of United Nations resident coordinators/UNDP resident representatives has been opened to other United Nations entities; nine resident coordinators have been directly recruited to date from other United Nations organizations, principally from the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) members. As of December 1995, a total of 45 of the 115 resident coordinators in post come directly from or have worked in an agency other than UNDP. UNDP has made a special effort to recruit from outside the Programme. It is essential that interested agencies make every effort to present the best possible candidates for vacant resident coordinator posts, keeping in mind post profiles. Pursuant to paragraph 37 (b) of General Assembly resolution 50/120, UNDP will make further efforts to develop a special post profile with the host Government before the recruitment process begins.

4. The development of key competencies of United Nations resident coordinators/UNDP resident representatives is receiving special attention. An annual induction briefing for all first-time resident coordinators/resident representatives was established in September 1994, focusing on roles, responsibilities and accountability. An advanced workshop on policy-based programming and services for development for experienced resident coordinators/ resident representatives was piloted in May 1995 by UNDP and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Turin Centre in consultation with the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) secretariat. The third in this series of workshops is planned for April 1996. This successful programme is being opened to participants from JCGP and other agencies. It is projected that nearly all current resident coordinators/resident representatives will have participated in at least one of these workshops by the end of 1996. During 1996, UNDP is planning a comprehensive review of resident coordinator/ resident representative competencies.

B. Follow-up to major international conferences

5. As Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Development, the Administrator has been assisting the Secretary-General in ensuring effective follow-up at the inter-agency level to the international conferences in the context of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). At its second regular session in 1995, ACC decided to establish three inter-agency task forces that would take a multisectoral, cross-cutting approach to follow-up to the conferences. The task forces were organized on the basis of cross-cutting themes rather than on the basis of individual conferences. The three task forces address: (a) basic social services for all; (b) full employment and sustainable livelihoods for all; and (c) the enabling environment for people-centred sustainable development. Initially, the three task forces are being chaired respectively by UNFPA, ILO and the World Bank. The task forces will seek to provide concrete outputs such as joint or complementary programme proposals and specific guidelines for the resident coordinator. The first task force, which was transformed from the earlier task force on follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), has already provided a set of guidelines to the resident coordinator system on practical follow-up measures for that conference. Following endorsement by the General Assembly of the outcomes of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Secretary-General has proposed to members of ACC the creation of a fourth task force on empowerment and advancement of women. The Administrator has written to resident coordinators/resident representatives providing them guidance for country-level follow-up based on the outcomes of ACC.

C. Coordination at regional and subregional levels

6. In 1995, UNDP and the regional economic commissions jointly established a task force on strengthening collaboration in six areas: (a) mechanisms for regional level coordination; (b) policy analysis and specific areas of collaboration; (c) incorporation of the regional dimension into country strategy notes; (d) setting up mechanisms for two-way exchange of information; (e) examining execution modalities of regional programmes; and (f) mechanisms

for collaboration on resource mobilization strategies. The task force is chaired by the Associate Administrator and consists of senior officers of the commissions and UNDP. The task force serves to ensure a global overview of ongoing UNDP collaboration with regional economic commissions and has provided added impetus to collaboration at the working level.

7. The Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions hold periodic coordination meetings of United Nations entities and agencies that undertake activities at the regional level. The regional bureaux of UNDP have participated in these meetings.

III. PROGRAMMING MATTERS

A. Country strategy note

8. Through its support facility to the resident coordinator system, UNDP has been supporting resident coordinators in their assistance to Governments, where requested, in preparing country strategy notes (CSNs). As of February 1996, in a total of 131 countries the situation is as follows: the CSN is completed and has been adopted by the Government in 9 countries; a final draft of the CSN is being considered by the Government for approval in 8 countries; preliminary drafts of the CSN have been prepared in 7 countries and in another 19 the CSN is expected to be completed soon. The CSN process is at a very initial stage in 43 countries, and in 39 countries, the Government has not yet made a final decision on undertaking a CSN. In six countries, the Government has decided not to pursue a CSN.

B. Harmonization

9. Within JCGP, UNDP has chaired the subgroup on the harmonization of programme implementation and country-level management since 1995. Also since 1995, UNFPA has chaired the subgroup on the harmonization of programming procedures. During 1995, efforts within these subgroups were accelerated to demonstrate concrete results. Regarding the harmonization of programming cycles, the subgroup divided programme countries into four categories: (a) countries where programming cycles of JCGP members were already harmonized; (b) countries where it is agreed that programming cycles will be harmonized by the year 1999; (c) countries where harmonization is possible; and (d) special cases.

10. Current figures show a total of 27 countries in category (a); 45 in (b); 24 in (c); and 7 in (d). At the country level, UNDP is seeking to ensure the implementation of harmonized cycles through the resident coordinator system in countries in categories (b) and (c). The new programming procedures of UNDP distinguish the programming cycle (which is in principle determined by the Government's planning period) from the financial cycle, which is a three-year rolling cycle. In principle, all funds and programmes should be able to harmonize their programming cycles with the Government's planning period, independently of their own financial cycle.

11. A common JCGP manual on the harmonization of programming procedures, as recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/199, is in the preparatory stage. In this context, the JCGP subgroup on the harmonization of programming procedures has made progress in specific areas such as common guidelines on monitoring and evaluation and a methodology for common country assessments and common databases for programming. There are, however, a number of practical challenges that must still be overcome. For example, not all JCGP members provide assistance in the form of discrete projects or programmes so that common programme or project procedures would not always be practicable. None the less, the building block approach that is being followed is expected to result in specific guidelines in areas where they are feasible.

C. Programme approach

12. The programme approach was promoted by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992, almost concurrently with the beginning of the fifth cycle (1992-1996). However, by the time clear operational guidelines were available, and given the average gestation period of projects, most country programmes had already tied up their resources in new but conventional projects, and in old projects carried over from the fourth cycle. Consequently, most of the country programmes that have undergone mid-term reviews remain largely project-oriented. They are, none the less, better focused, with fewer concentration areas (four on average), than during the fourth cycle. A further step towards the programme approach was achieved by consolidating small projects and regrouping project activities around themes and sectors in order to enhance programme impact, which has led to a global reduction in the historical phenomenon of "project scatter".

13. The thrust to apply the formal programme approach has thus in general been more successful for programmes developed later in the fifth cycle. Significant progress has been noted, for example, in Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia and Nigeria. However, during the overall learning process, some conceptual and operational problems have arisen. For instance, national priorities and national programmes are seldom articulated in the manner and with the level of detail required by the programme approach, which is by definition multisectoral, requiring interministerial coordination and linkages. Flexibility in the interpretation and application of the programme approach modality is therefore essential.

14. A few Governments remain wary of the added value of the programme approach vis-à-vis a large conventional project, for example, considering its high costs (information, formulation, opportunity, management, staff time), especially in the context of overall cutbacks in administrative budgets. Some countries have questioned the value of the programme approach as an instrument of resource mobilization: they have experienced a general failure to attract additional resources through the modality despite extensive prior consultations with donors, including bilateral donors. This has strongly suggested that, all things considered, most donors still seem to prefer to work within their own structures.

15. To facilitate the understanding and adoption of the programme approach in country programming, UNDP has prepared PSD/PSIA guidelines (1993), a training package, including a training video (1994) and has contributed to the work on guidelines on monitoring and evaluation guidelines on the programme approach through CCPOQ (1994). UNDP is also collaborating with the ILO Turin Centre and the ACC/CCPOQ in the preparation of a generic programme-approach training package for use by the United Nations development system and other interested bodies. UNDP is presently carrying out an assessment of its overall experience with the application of the programme approach and will shortly issue a revised set of process instruments on this modality.

D. Common guidelines at the field level for the recruitment, training, and remuneration of national project personnel

16. In following up on paragraph 26 of General Assembly resolution 50/120, UNDP will work with other JCGP partners within the context of the subgroup on the harmonization of programming procedures to develop these common guidelines, taking into account remuneration scales and practices that apply to national Professional staff in country offices, recognizing the different terms of reference of project personnel. A specific working group of this subgroup has already produced draft guidelines on the separate issue of payments to government staff in the context of projects. No conceptual problems are foreseen in dealing with the project personnel issue, which is already extensively covered by procedures at the level of individual funds and programmes. The task will be to build on common ground between the procedures of individual funds and programmes.

E. National execution and national capacity-building

17. National execution. An increase in the number of programmes and projects managed under the modality of national execution was reported in almost all mid-term reviews of fifth cycle country programmes. The modality has been useful in fostering the ownership of country programmes and the integration of external cooperation into national programmes. National institutions are generally assuming increasing responsibility for the recruitment of project staff, placement of fellows, procurement of equipment, financial management and reporting and other implementation activities.

18. At the same time, some administrative problems with this approach have been noted in a number of mid-term reviews. The general experience is that current procedures for its implementation are cumbersome, especially when compared with national procedures and those of other development partners. Particular concern was expressed about the practice of quarterly requests for advances and accompanying expenditure reports, which in the experience of some countries was regarded as time-consuming and not consistent with local practice.

19. In general, country offices and Governments have coped with the administrative problems of national execution in a number of ways. One approach has been to raise the understanding of national execution procedures and

accountability requirements through extensive regional and national training workshops. Other approaches have included the creation of special, project-funded national execution units (e.g., China, Egypt, India, Lebanon, Malawi, Viet Nam, Zambia); the issuance of country-specific national execution guidelines in addition to the standard UNDP guidelines; and the provision of direct support by the UNDP country office and/or the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

20. The Administrator has taken note of the experience with national execution as reflected in the mid-term review exercises, especially the need to review the nature and frequency of its procedures and requirements to bring them closer to national practices and those of other development partners, without compromising financial and substantive accountability. A formal evaluation of the national execution modality covering 11 countries and 35 projects was carried out in mid-1995 and its conclusions and recommendations will be fully considered in updating national execution procedures and requirements and in ensuring that its implementation enhances capacity-building and national ownership of development activities.

21. Capacity development. Capacity development was identified as the central objective of most country programmes that have undergone mid-term reviews, except in a few countries where the focus has shifted towards humanitarian support, including direct support and services, as in, for example, Burundi, Haiti and Rwanda.

22. Most country programmes espoused conventional strategies for capacity development, specifically the provision of training in all its varied forms - workshops, seminars, on-the-job training, fellowships and the assignment of international staff both to train national counterparts and to provide line services. In general, these approaches have been successful in raising individual and institutional skill levels. However, UNDP has also learned that capacity development is a complex phenomenon, requiring interactions of decision-making systems at various levels - central, regional, subregional and local. Accordingly, in a number of country programmes, UNDP has sought to involve the intended beneficiaries in capacity-development activities as part of the process of empowering them. Particularly successful efforts were reported in Myanmar and Sudan in the area development schemes and in Argentina and Peru in strengthening the capacity of provincial and local governments to formulate, implement and manage development activities.

23. In general, the continuing constraints to the development of sustainable national capacities in the areas of UNDP support, remain, in the less developed countries, the absence of a critical mass of suitably trained national staff, the high turnover of these staff and the non-fulfilment of national budgetary and in-kind commitments to projects. Underlying these operational constraints is the continuing absence or insufficiency of an enabling public sector environment, particularly the lack of adequate compensation and incentive systems.

24. UNDP attaches particular importance to issues of national capacity development and has recently issued a publication on the subject (Building Sustainable Capacity: Challenges for the Public Sector (1994), undertaken in

conjunction with the Harvard Institute for International Development). The publication is particularly useful in helping country offices and Governments to assess systematically national capacity-development issues and requirements and to develop appropriate strategies to address them. In addition, UNDP is supporting Governments in their efforts to implement necessary administrative reforms and to create the enabling environment for sustainable capacity development.

F. Agreed division of labour

25. UNDP and other funds and programmes are currently preparing mission statements for submission to their Executive Boards as a means to ensure a legislative basis for further division of labour at the country level. Within the subsidiary machinery of ACC, the inter-agency task forces and CCPOQ in particular are also helping to define the division of labour in view of their collaboration on concrete substantive themes. Assignation of responsibilities to particular funds, programmes and agencies within these mechanisms follows their respective comparative advantages and mandates. The process of assigning responsibilities reaffirms those comparative advantages and differing mandates and can be expected to have a beneficial spill-over effect on more general collaboration between funds, programmes and agencies.

IV. MANAGEMENT, PERSONNEL AND FINANCE MATTERS

A. Management audit systems and aid accountability

26. The JCGP subgroup on the harmonization of programme implementation and country-level management had assigned the subject of management audit systems to a specific working group, which has now concluded its tasks. There have been periodic consultations between the management audit services of the funds and programmes. In the field of management audit systems and approaches, considerable consensus has been achieved, particularly in standards for conduct of auditing.

27. A harmonized Aid Management and Accountability Framework (AMAF) has been developed through collaboration among several donors with UNDP involvement. UNDP hosts the global secretariat for the implementation of this framework. The AMAF methodology was developed as a result of the AMAF initiative taken by a group of donors at a 1990 meeting in Vienna. The initiative calls for greater uniformity in donor accountability requirements - a working group has been established to make specific proposals for the harmonization and simplification of such requirements. The framework is described in greater detail in chapter III, part three, of the present report.

B. Training

28. The JCGP Working Group on Training, which is part of the Subgroup on Personnel and Training, met six times between April and November 1995. Efforts have concentrated on four areas: (a) information exchange on emergency training; (b) development and coordination training; (c) task-sharing on the development of materials; and (d) the role of training in strengthening field collaboration. In terms of system-wide training to support coordination and the resident coordinator system, UNDP has been providing substantive and financial support to specific programmes of the ILO Turin Centre. Special workshops have included those on the programme approach, team-building within the resident coordinator system, and programmes for senior resident coordinators and other field representatives. Evaluations of these training activities have been generally positive, one of the main benefits being the strengthening of interpersonal links between country teams that facilitate collaboration on their return to their duty stations.

C. Gender balance in appointments

29. In 1995, UNDP adopted a comprehensive policy on gender balance. The policy has three principal aspects: (a) management accountability - managers are to be held accountable for promoting gender balance; (b) gender balance targets for all categories of Professional staff; (c) organizational culture - gender-related training initiatives are being proposed and developed. Also, UNDP participated in and supported the 1995 inter-agency consultative process that led to the joint statement of the Executive Heads of ACC members on gender balance, which represents a system-wide consensus on the matter.

D. Decentralization

30. In the ongoing process of ensuring that UNDP is more effective and responsive, decentralization was initiated through the increased delegation of authority with accountability to the country offices. The past few years have witnessed enhanced responsibility of resident representatives on personnel, financial and administrative matters. In line with these changes, project/programme appraisals, work planning and country programme reviews were also submitted to a more decentralized environment.

31. A new initiative will use country offices designated as centres of experimentation as the prime mechanism for implementing decentralization. Increased delegation of authority will be interlinked with the introduction of mechanisms and systems to enforce accountability and improve headquarters and country-office collaboration as well as to assign to headquarters a more effective operational support role. The activities involved include the definition of new revised policies and procedures, the development of new accountability instruments, the re-engineering of UNDP functional processes and the development of information support systems.

E. Common premises and administrative services

32. UNDP has chaired the JCGP subgroup on common premises and services since 1995. As of February 1996, two or more JCGP partner organizations are sharing common premises with UNDP in 52 countries, of which the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) participates in 27 locations. In several of these countries, other United Nations organizations are also sharing in common premises (e.g. the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)). Based on present plans to increase substantially the targets for common premises and services, in line with paragraph 47 of General Assembly resolution 50/120, JCGP organizations will share common premises in at least 68 countries by the end of 1997. Construction under the lease/purchase modality is foreseen mostly in least developed countries. In all cases, it is foreseen that at the end of the leasing period, ownership of the premises will revert to the host country on the understanding that the United Nations organizations will be able to use the premises rent-free and on a permanent basis.

33. In 1995, construction projects for common premises in four countries were completed. Of these, three premises are already occupied and are included in the above figure of 52 common premises. A draft proposal has been formulated and circulated among JCGP partners for the establishment of a joint monitoring and management mechanism for common premises and services that would provide for greater efficiency and economies of scale and would avoid duplication of efforts. The project foresees financial contributions from all participating organizations for the staffing of a joint management unit and its operating expenses. All four organizations have confirmed their participation. A harmonized submission to the respective executive boards on the future operational direction and policies governing the establishment of common premises and services is foreseen during 1996. Preparatory work for the identification and eventual selection of investors/developers for future common premises has included international and local advertising and has resulted so far in establishing the interest of 37 potential investors. A cost-effectiveness study is undertaken for each country. If the lease/purchase modality is not the most cost-effective solution, other more efficient alternatives will be pursued.

34. In the area of common services, common standards and guidelines for the installation of local area networks and information technology infrastructure were developed in 1995 and have been distributed to all country offices. The new common premises and services established in South Africa could in future serve as a model for replication in other locations. UNDP, with its JCGP partners, will seek to increase the number of common services accounts in all locations where JCGP partner organizations share common premises, in order to economize on common charges.

PART TWO

FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1995/50: COLLABORATION WITH THE BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

35. In 1995, within the context of the Senior Officials Meeting of the United Nations Secretariat, under the chairmanship of the Associate Administrator of UNDP, a special working group was created on strengthening cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions. The working group has a system-wide perspective but is in the first instance examining common areas of interest among entities of the Secretariat.

36. For its own part, UNDP has been collaborating actively with the World Bank for many years. The former UNDP/World Bank Task Force was redefined in 1995 to focus on the following areas: (a) policy-level dialogue; (b) country-level collaboration; (c) aid-coordination and (d) complex emergencies. In keeping with the common reporting format of the funds and programmes, these subjects are divided below into collaboration in policy matters and collaboration in operational activities at the country level.

II. COLLABORATION IN POLICY MATTERS

37. At the global level, in the context of the United Nations system initiative on follow-up to international conferences, the World Bank chairs the ACC Inter-agency Task Force on the Enabling Environment for People-Centred Sustainable Development, in which UNDP takes part. Similarly, the World Bank has contributed substantively to the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa. In the Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Bank and UNDP have shared many of the same concerns and their positions have been mutually supportive. Other substantive areas where bilateral policy-level discussions are under way are in water-resources management, energy, microcredit, poverty assessments and strategies, governance, sustainable management of forests and agricultural research. UNDP is consulting with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the common ground between the IMF concept of "high-quality growth" and the concept of "sustainable human development" mandated to UNDP by its Executive Board. This conceptual work is expected to facilitate greater collaboration at the country level, where, as shown below, IMF is a significant implementing agency for UNDP-funded technical cooperation, particularly in the area of economic management.

III. COLLABORATION IN OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

38. Country-level cooperation with the World Bank has been long established. Many programme country Governments have chosen to use proceeds from World Bank loans for co-financing UNDP-funded projects under the government cost-sharing modality. While this practice is broadly utilized in the Latin America and Caribbean region, current discussions with the World Bank cover the feasibility of expanding the procedure in other regions. Another promising area of collaboration is in countries emerging from conflicts. One modality being developed is the use of UNDP-managed resources to facilitate and enable the re-entry of the World Bank in post-conflict situations in countries requiring resources for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

39. UNDP and the World Bank are seeking to strengthen their collaboration in Consultative Group and round-table meetings. A formal agreement on aid coordination already exists between both organizations and has established normal roles for both organizations during the various phases of the consultative group and round-table mechanisms, recognizing that it is the prerogative of the Government to choose the actual coordination mechanism. A further agreement is being reached regarding respective roles of the organizations, particularly in follow-up to Consultative Groups and round-table meetings, including the question of national capacity-building.

40. UNDP and IMF are seeking to increase country-level collaboration in both policy and operations. The main issue regarding collaboration in policy is for Governments to establish links between the preparatory processes of both the policy framework paper, where the IMF and World Bank have been primarily involved, and the country strategy note, where United Nations funds, programmes and agencies have been primarily involved. With regard to operations, UNDP has had an executing-agency agreement with IMF since 1989. To date, UNDP has provided financing of some $21.6 million for technical cooperation projects implemented by IMF and aimed at building national capacity in such areas as fiscal affairs and central banking.

PART THREE

FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1995/51

I. INTRODUCTION

41. The themes of monitoring, evaluation, national capacity for management and coordination of international assistance and cost-effectiveness are closely related to the implementation of the triennial policy review. However, the themes are dealt with in detail here in view of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/51 on these themes.

II. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

42. UNDP has already given high priority to monitoring and evaluation by addressing the issue of impact and performance through a wide range of entry levels: project; programme (sector and theme); country programme (mid-term review and evaluation); and the programme approach.

43. The monitoring and evaluation system in UNDP covers additional important non-indicative planning figure (IPF) large programmes such as the Special Programme Resources (SPR)-funded programmes, Capacity 21 and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).

44. UNDP has also developed a portfolio of strategic evaluations in parallel with more traditional performance evaluations. Such evaluations include the following topics: national execution; co-financing modalities; the resident coordinator system; and SPR.

45. UNDP is revisiting its own guidelines for monitoring and evaluation in the light of the experience gained and is preparing new guiding principles for country programme and participatory evaluations.

46. UNDP is strengthening the feedback system through training, regional workshops, publications, special presentations to the senior management and decentralization of the central evaluation database.

III. STRENGTHENING NATIONAL CAPACITY FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

47. The concern for improved management and coordination of aid is part of the overall concern for improved public sector management, and the effective and efficient use of public resources. UNDP has taken the steps described below to strengthen the management and coordination of international assistance.

48. An in-depth study of the area was undertaken by the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support in 1994, entitled "Aid Coordination and Aid Management by Governments: A Role for UNDP" and the experience of UNDP in the field was evaluated by an independent team. The policy recommendations were approved by

senior management and provide a stronger focus for UNDP efforts in the area of strengthening national capacity for aid coordination and management.

49. The Administrator has approved additional funds to support round-table meetings and UNDP involvement in Consultative Group meetings. Action has been taken to improve UNDP support in the round-table process and to ensure adequate country-level follow-up.

50. The harmonized Aid Management and Accountability Framework (AMAF), mentioned in section IV A of part one of the present report, mentioned in section IV A of part one of the present report, has been implemented with the help of a global secretariat located in UNDP. The framework outlines a set of basic principles covering: national management; national accountability; national accounts; implementing agents; financial management systems and controls; supreme audit institutions; disbursement methods; direct payments; standardized formats; and national procurement.

51. An important point signalled in the AMAF is that government institutional arrangements and commitments, policies, systems, human and financial resources must all be conducive to effective management and accountability. The creation of a focal point for aid management and accountability (to be known as an Office of Aid Management) is recommended.

52. The approach to improved aid management and accountability is based on a joint commitment by donor agencies and the host countries: (a) to strengthen national capacity in public financial management systems and (b) to streamline and harmonize the reporting requirements and procedures of the various donors.

IV. IMPROVING NATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE EVALUATION OF UNITED NATIONS OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

53. The UNDP initiatives for change strategy re-emphasizes that all UNDP programmes are country-driven and country-owned. Some 70 per cent of all UNDP projects are nationally executed, thus placing the primary onus of managing evaluations clearly on the national authorities. UNDP is assisting national authorities in this task. Three pilot regional workshops on monitoring and evaluation have been programmed to target national programme officers, government officials responsible for evaluation and civil society members. Two of these workshops were undertaken in 1995 and a third is foreseen for 1996. The objectives of the workshops are to impart concepts and skills in designing and managing evaluations, particularly within the concept of the programme approach. The workshops present monitoring and evaluation as tools to facilitate decision-making and learning as well as to enhance accountability. They are expected to have a multiplier effect as participants in turn train others on their return. Training materials and packages will be made available through the UNDP country office network to facilitate further multiplication of training in this area.

V. PROMOTING GREATER COLLABORATION IN EVALUATION

54. UNDP has been promoting greater inter-agency collaboration in evaluation through its chairing of the Interagency Working Group on Evaluation (IAWG). The most important issues recently examined by the IAWG include (a) building national capacity in monitoring and evaluation; (b) guidelines for evaluation of gender issues; (c) evaluation data bases; and (d) rating systems for projects. The IAWG has developed some common understanding on these topics. The IAWG last met in November 1995 to examine, among other subjects: (a) national monitoring and evaluation capacity-building; (b) participatory evaluation; (c) evaluation databases; and (d) performance rating systems for programmes/projects. The 1996 meeting will cover institutional issues, impact measurement and evaluation capacity-building in programme countries.

55. In the context of the IAWG, UNDP has been developing with agency partners a document entitled "Operational guidance on the application of the guiding principles for a monitoring and evaluation methodology in the context of the programme approach". The aim of this document, which will be distributed widely in 1996, is to advise programme countries and agency country offices in utilizing the previously approved guiding principles.

56. Through the JCGP subgroup on evaluation, UNDP is developing common harmonized guidelines for monitoring and evaluation at the project level, the country level (programme, theme and sector) and the cross-country level (theme).

57. As chair of the IAWG, UNDP is organizing some evaluation working groups that will: (a) discuss ways and means for the joint implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 90/51 as far as it requires a system-wide approach and (b) support the Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat in implementing paragraph 56 of General Assembly resolution 50/120, in which the General Assembly requires an evaluation of the impact of operational activities for development.

VI. SCOPE FOR IMPROVING THE COST EFFECTIVENESS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

58. Some information on this topic has already been provided in part one, section IV E, of the present report. UNDP will continue in 1996 and beyond to build on the initial experience of the common services account (CSA), based on considerations of cost-effectiveness. The CSA is a major innovation in improving cost-effectiveness through economies of scale and improved coordination in the provision of services. The CSA involves a certain pooling of administrative services with pro-rata cost-recovery from each agency, according to usage. The principle is, of course, simpler to apply in new duty stations where the United Nations is setting up a presence, such as in South Africa.

PART FOUR

FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1995/56: HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

59. The following information has been prepared in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 but also taking into account paragraph 51 of General Assembly resolution 50/120. Within the framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group (IASC-WG), UNDP is participating in the task force established to follow-up to Council resolution 1995/56. In attending to the 10 indicative issues annexed to resolution 1995/56, the task force has identified, for detailed examination, issues related to evaluation; resource mobilization; country-level coordination; roles and responsibilities related to internally displaced persons; the relationship between relief and development; human resource development and staff security; and strengthening the capacity of local coping mechanisms. The results of these consultations and information from participating agencies is being reported on separately, from a system-wide perspective, in the report of the Secretary-General to the Council.

60. At its first regular session 1996, the Executive Board asked UNDP to provide information on the role of the resident coordinator in crises, coordination of appeals and the relation of the round-table mechanism to consolidated appeals by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) and issues related to overlap with other United Nations organizations in specific activities. The Executive Board also requested information on the resource situation of the Emergency Response Division. That information will be provided at a later date in a separate report.

61. In order to respond to the requests of the Executive Board and to further expand upon the particular concerns of UNDP, selected issues are presented below.

II. ROLE AND OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Primary functions

62. UNDP has undertaken to produce a compendium of its experience in countries in special situations, reflecting a range of programme activities and services. They can be summarized as follows:

(a) Identifying the elements of an overall strategy or framework for national and international action and relevant programmes, whether in conjunction with the consolidated inter-agency appeals launched by DHA, through the round-table mechanism or special consultations or through ad hoc programming missions;

(b) Carrying out activities of a semi-emergency character, with extrabudgetary funds provided by one or several donors, including funds from

United Nations assessed budgets when these activities do not fall within the mandate of a particular United Nations entity;

(c) Financing and monitoring specific activities, of a preventive and curative nature, from general resources or special accounts under UNDP control, using other United Nations agencies and civil society organizations as implementing partners;

(d) Coordinating in-country programme implementation through the resident coordinator's office and providing administrative support services for the donor community.

B. Addressing the needs of internally displaced persons

63. UNDP sees its role and responsibilities in response to internally displaced persons primarily at the prevention and resettlement phases. It is therefore undertaking to strengthen programmes aiming to reduce social and economic vulnerabilities which may lead to internal displacement, to continue to provide appropriate activities, even under conditions of volatility and crisis, to reduce such displacement and to ensure timely programmes to increase the absorptive capacity of communities to resettle uprooted populations at the earliest opportunity.

III. CAPACITY TO RESPOND

64. UNDP responses to crisis and disaster situations are derived from the three goals endorsed in Executive Board decision 94/14 in support of sustainable human development and are supportive of the four priority areas of poverty eradication, job creation, environmental regeneration and advancement of women also endorsed in decision 94/14.

65. UNDP has demonstrated a capacity to respond to countries in special circumstances in the following nine general categories: (a) disaster prevention, preparedness and support to coordination in sudden crisis conditions; (b) area rehabilitation to settle uprooted populations; (c) rebuilding institutions and improving governance; (d) reintegrating demobilized combatants; (e) demining; (f) organizing national elections; (g) stimulating the private sector and income-generation; (h) macroeconomic planning and economic reform; and (i) managing delivery of programme aid.

66. New guidelines and procedures are currently being formulated to strengthen the capacity of country offices to address the primary functions identified above in a timely and effective manner. The framework for these guidelines is being presented separately in response to Executive Board decision 96/07.

Level of delegation of authority and procedures for rapid response

67. In selected disaster-prone countries and upon the occurrence of a significant disaster, the resident representative/resident coordinator has operated with special delegated authority to disburse up to $50,000 with a delayed requirement to formalize this action through a project document. New procedures are proposed that would raise the amount of this authority to $200,000 and extend the delegation to all country offices to facilitate their immediate response to sudden crises or disasters.

IV. RESOURCES AND EVALUATION

A. Reporting, evaluation and the impact of the allocation of resources

68. Allocations from SPR category A - disaster mitigation have been the major source of funding for UNDP activities in emergencies during the fifth cycle. Category A of the SPR is divided into four subcategories: A1 - Disaster preparedness and management; A2 - Emergency phase activities; A3 - Rehabilitation and reconstruction; and A4 - Refugees, returnees and displaced persons. A report of the experience and lessons learned during the course of 1995 is provided to the Executive Board in the main programme record, addendum 1 to the annual report of the Administrator (DP/1996/18/Add.1).

69. Feedback from country office reports shows that, while modest in size, many SPR allocations have been used imaginatively and to good effect. Lessons learned show that in addition to reinforcing government capacity, UNDP country offices can render valuable coordination services to the national and international community in such areas as early warning and disaster response. A result in many countries has been to create a new awareness of the ready but unused potential for improving disaster preparedness and to increase the priority of this item on national agendas. SPR funding has had considerable impact on main-streaming the issue of disaster management into the overall development process, promoting development initiatives such as those focusing on increased food security, improved road networks, land-use zoning, or construction codes which, in turn, have a direct impact on reducing vulnerability to disaster. At the same time, SPR funding has been increasingly utilized to respond to the complex emergency situation.

70. An in-depth evaluation of the use and impact of SPR funds throughout the fifth cycle will be undertaken in 1996. The experience gained in the management and administration of these funds will provide a valuable input for UNDP in its management of successor arrangements pertaining to resources for development in countries in special situations (see Executive Board decision 95/23, table, line 1.1.3).

B. Strengthening local capacity and coping mechanisms

71. Support for the development of national disaster-management plans and the establishment of early warning systems and national networks of coordinating bodies has been increasingly supported by UNDP through SPR-funded projects. The Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP), co-managed by UNDP and DHA has also provided further impetus to national authorities to identify and address needs for capacity-building appropriate to the country situation. Building on the previous experience of the DMTP, organized primarily in countries with a high vulnerability to natural disasters, activities during 1995 expanded to embrace the post-conflict concerns of countries such as Mozambique and Papua New Guinea. Plans are under way to implement the DMTP in 1996 in countries directly affected by humanitarian emergency in order to strengthen their capacity to manage and cope with the impact of crisis.

72. In addressing the inequities between social groups, which contribute to conflict and complex emergency situations, UNDP will be significantly strengthening its ability to provide programmes of preventive development by further developing its policy and substantive support base. Directed primarily to the goal of avoiding such emergencies, these programmes will also attend to the needs of local communities to build capacities to sustain lives and livelihoods and develop mechanisms to cope with crisis conditions. During crises, UNDP will seek to maintain active programmes of assistance that can prevent massive dislocation of populations and that will hasten the return from relief to recovery. Building upon the experience and monitoring of events over the past year, it is expected that 1996 will see the implementation of a range of significant projects of a curative nature, responding to the rehabilitation and recovery needs of a number of countries currently emerging from civil strife.

C. Participation in consolidated appeals and coordination with the round-table mechanism

73. Within the context of the IASC, the inter-agency consolidated appeal process coordinated by DHA is being reviewed by participating United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Governments. The overall experience of UNDP is that the consolidated appeal does not provide resources for those initiatives that would significantly address the need for continued developmental activities in those areas of relative stability or in those that would serve to facilitate a rapid transition from the humanitarian crisis to recovery. UNDP is undertaking to work closely with DHA throughout 1996 in order to develop appropriate mechanisms to facilitate the formulation of coordinated strategies and programmes responding to relief and development requirements.

74. At its seventh session in September 1995, the CCPOQ recognized the critical nature of the post-conflict situation facing the United Nations system, requiring priority attention. UNDP and the United Nations Department of Development Support and Management Services (DDSMS) and DHA agreed to initiate, with the involvement of all concerned organizations, a number of first steps in this regard, including a review of new sources and methods of funding or contributing in kind. As the focal point for this review, UNDP will be

undertaking wide-based consultations with other United Nations programmes, funds and agencies and Bretton Woods institutions towards identifying efficient and effective mechanisms to ensure the coordination of resource mobilization approaches that will meet the full range of requirements of countries in these special situations.

V. COORDINATION

A. Role of the resident coordinator in crises

75. In keeping with General Assembly resolution 46/182, the resident coordinator should normally coordinate the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system at the country level. At the same time, the resident coordinator functions to ensure the preparedness of the United Nations system and to assist in the speedy transition from relief to development. In this regard, the resident coordinator also serves as the in-country focal point for the United Nations system in the formulation of a collaborative framework for rehabilitation and recovery efforts.

76. The resident coordinator and the disaster management team, comprised largely of the in-country representatives of the United Nations system, also serve as the first line of initial response to a complex emergency. In most instances characterized by complex emergency conditions, the resident coordinator serves also as the designated humanitarian coordinator, representing and reporting directly to the United Nations emergency relief coordinator in facilitating and ensuring the quick, effective, and well-coordinated provision of humanitarian assistance to those seriously affected by the emergency.

77. Support of the United Nations system to the resident coordinator in respect of responsibilities to be discharged in response to natural disasters has facilitated this role to a great extent. However, the experience has been that resources required to strengthen the capacity of the office of the resident coordinator to meet these responsibilities in conditions of complex emergency have been extremely limited. UNDP has initiated efforts within the framework of the IASC to reach a broader consensus within the United Nations system on the appropriate in-country structures and sources of ready funds, or in-kind resources, to meet the requirements of the resident coordinator to function effectively.

B. Overlap with other United Nations organizations

78. At the country level, the resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator, where designated, along with the established disaster management team, outline the respective responsibilities of each partner so that overlap can be avoided. Sector specific groups with identified lead agencies are normally established, comprising representatives of all pertinent United Nations organizations, NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral organizations with operations in the sector. While more than one organization may be involved in a particular sector, the group is mandated to reach agreement on collaborative

initiatives and, where appropriate, the selection of geographic areas of focus for individual organizations.

C. Development of cooperative memorandums of understanding

79. Existing memorandums of understanding with other organizations are being reviewed and revised to ensure that they provide a framework for clear and comprehensive action between UNDP and its operational partners. Given the exigency and diversity of requirements posed by emergency situations, country level memorandums of understanding and exchanges of letters of agreement guiding specific operational activities have also proven to be an effective mechanism to enhance collaboration. Joint working groups and task forces between UNDP and other organizations (such as UNHCR and the World Bank) have also been established and will be strengthened to further reduce gaps and overlaps in resource mobilization and programme activities.

VI. EVALUATION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

80. The success of the DMTP in bringing together national authorities and in-country staff of the United Nations system has been documented in an in-depth evaluation completed by UNDP in 1995. Future plans for the DMTP are presently being formulated towards revising its management structure and substantive focus to strengthen its ability to serve system-wide staff development needs. UNDP is also participating in the design of the Complex Emergency Training Initiative (CETI) to be launched by DHA this year. Complementary to staff training programmes of individual organizations, the CETI will bring a common focus to meeting skill and knowledge requirements of staff operating within the complex emergency environment.

81. UNDP has also recently completed a working paper on building staff competencies relating to emergency conditions and will be implementing the recommendations of the paper during 1996. Further UNDP initiatives in this area are also addressed in part one of the present report.